

43 AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

43 Ferrying Squadron constituted, 9 Jul 1942

Activated, 17 Aug 1942

Redesignated 43 Transport Squadron, 24 Mar 1943

Disbanded, 30 Sep 1943

43 Air Refueling Squadron, Medium, 30 Jun 1948

Activated, 19 Jul 1948

Redesignated 43 Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy, 15 Nov 1960

43 Transport Squadron reconstituted, and consolidated with 43 Air Refueling Squadron,
Heavy, 19 Sep 1985

Redesignated 43 Air Refueling Squadron, 1 Sep 1991

Inactivated, 31 Mar 1995

Redesignated 43 Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, and converted to provisional status, 12
Jun 2002

STATIONS

Accra, British Gold Coast, 17 Aug 1942-30 Sep 1943

Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 19 Jul 1948-14 Nov 1960

Larson AFB, WA, 15 Nov 1960

Fairchild AFB, WA, 2 Apr 1966

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Lakenheath RAF Station, England, 21 Mar-5 Jun 1953
Fairford RAF Station, England, 18 Sep-9 Dec 1954
Ernest Harmon AFB, Newfoundland, 28 Oct-28 Dec 1955

ASSIGNMENTS

12 Ferrying (later, 12 Transport) Group, 17 Aug 1942-30 Sep 1943
43 Bombardment Group, Medium, 19 Jul 1948
43 Bombardment Wing, Medium, 16 Jun 1952
303 Bombardment Wing, Medium, 1960
4170 Strategic Wing, 15 Nov 1960
462 Strategic Aerospace Wing, 1 Feb 1963
92 Strategic Aerospace Wing (later, 92 Bombardment Wing, Heavy), 2 Apr 1966
92 Operations Group, 1 Sep 1991
453 Operations Group, 1 Jun 1992
92 Operations Group, 1 Jul 1994-31 Mar 1995
Air Mobility Command to activate or inactivate at any time after 12 Jun 2002

ATTACHMENTS

43 Bombardment Wing, Medium, 10 Feb 1951-15 Jun 1952
Eighth Air Force, 28 Oct-28 Dec 1955

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-47
C-53
C-87
B-29, 1948-1949
KB-29M, 1949-1953
KC-97G, 1953-1960
KC-135A, 1961
KC-135R

COMMANDERS

Maj Richard E. Fell, 4 Dec 1942
Capt Winston M. Asquith, 15 Jan 1943
Capt Richard Dixon, 12 Feb 1943
Capt Frank B. Scott, 23 Apr-20 Sep 1943
Capt George M. Lockhart, 19 Jul 1948
Unkn, Nov 1948-2 Jan 1949
Lt Col William C. Sipes Jr., 3 Jan 1949
Lt Col Leo W. Cook, 15 May 1951
Unkn, 30 Jun 1952-Jan 1953
Lt Col Ralph D. Sensenbrenner, Feb 1953
Lt Col Jerry O. Spray, 2 Jul 1954

Lt Col Frank G. Latawiec, 1 May 1957
Unkn, 2 Jan 1962-1966
Lt Col Robert L. Litchfield, Jun 1966
Lt Col William E. Kevan, Sep 1966
Lt Col Ralph W. Trousdale, Sep 1967
Lt Col Floyd J. Geiger, Sep 1968
Lt Col John C. Crocker, Dec 1970
Lt Col Arthur J. Halverson, 15 Dec 1971
Lt Col Eugene Bal Jr., 1 Mar 1973
Lt Col William R. Desmond, 18 Jun 1973
Lt Col Eugene Bal Jr., 1 Nov 1973
Lt Col Bobby S. Poteet, 14 Apr 1974
Lt Col Ronald J. Langlois, 1 Mar 1976
Lt Col Thomas W. Scott, 2 Jun 1978
Lt Col Jeremy F. Smith, 21 Jul 1980
Lt Col Lawrence L. White, 15 Jan 1982
Maj Noel N. Mears Jr., 30 Nov 1982
Lt Col John Szczypien Jr., 17 Jan 1983
Lt Col Gerald M. Beverly, 30 May 1984
Lt Col David E. Pine, 1 Jun 1984
Lt Col Gerald M. Beverly, 30 Jul 1984
Lt Col John Ekwall, 15 Oct 1985
Lt Col Robert E. Dawson, 4 Feb 1987
Lt Col John H. Gurtcheff, 24 Jun 1988
Lt Col James O. Kallstrom, 8 Jun 1990
Lt Col James W. Pzinski, 14 Feb 1992
Lt Col Bernard V. Traynor III, 4 Jun 1993-31 Mar 1995
Lt Col Richard L. Rohrer

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II

European-African-Middle Eastern Theater

Campaign Streamers

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device

2 Mar-30 Sep 1969

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1959-31 Aug 1960

1 Jul 1967-30 Jun 1968

1 Jul-1 Oct 1968

1 Jul 1969-30 Jun 1970

1 Jul 1976-30 Jun 1977

1 Jul 1989-30 Jun 1990

1 Jul 1990-29 May 1992

1 Jun 1992-30 Jun 1993

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, with Palm

2 Mar 1969-30 Jun 1970

EMBLEM





On a disc per bend white and Air Force blue, edged black, the face of a Saint Bernard dog shades of tan and white, eyeballs white, iris blue, pupil black highlighted white and light blue, with a cask under his chin, shades of brown, all outlines and detail black. The Saint Bernard dog, with a cask under his chin, symbolically represented in fact and fiction as carrying needed supplies to adventuresome travelers, is particularly appropriate to the mission of an air refueling squadron. The background colors, blue and white, are the traditional colors of the squadron, having been used since 1948 when the squadron was first activated, and signifying that the unit's aircraft are prepared to do their job anywhere on the globe-over land or water, in the arctic or tropics, summer or winter, and day or night. (Approved, 7 Jun 1955)

MOTTO

The squadron motto, FIRST GLOBAL REFUELERS, is in recognition that this unit carried out the air refueling for the first non-stop flight around the world, completed by B-50 "Lucky Lady II" in 1949.

OPERATIONS

Transport in the theater and as far east as India, Dec 1942-Sep 1943; in addition, delivered combat and transport aircraft to British forces in the Middle East and later to US forces in North Africa.

Activated on 17 Aug 1942, the 43 Ferrying Squadron did not become operational at Accra, British Gold Coast (now Ghana), Africa, until 4 December. As a unit of the 12th Ferrying Group, the 43d delivered combat and transport aircraft to British forces in the Middle East and later to U.S. forces in North Africa, but its major task was the transport of high priority cargo and personnel within the theater and as far east as Karachi, India. Redesignated the 43d Transport Squadron in March 1943, it disbanded on 30 Sep 1943 during a reorganization of Air Transport Command units in North Africa.

One of two refueling squadrons that the Strategic Air Command activated on 12 Jul 1948, the 43d Air Refueling Squadron, Medium, was the USAF's first air refueling unit. The 43d AREFS began

operations in January 1949, flying KB-29Ms from Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. These first tankers were B-29s modified to carry and dispense fuel in the air. Employing trailing hoses and grapnel hooks. 1948

In February 1949 supported the circumnavigation flight of the "Lucky Lady II", the first aircraft to fly non-stop around the world.

On 6 July, a KB-29M of the Air Materiel Command operated by a crew of SAC's 43d Air Refueling Squadron conducted the first air refueling operation over enemy territory under combat conditions. Operating out of Yokota Air Base, Japan, and temporarily assigned to the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, the KB-29M refueled four RF-80s flying a reconnaissance mission over North Korea. In the meantime, one 91st Air Refueling Squadron KB-29P, outfitted with the boom type system, had deployed from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, to Yokota where it was assigned to Detachment 2 of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, which was operating RB-45Cs. On 14 July, the KB-29P successfully refueled one of the RB-45Cs on a combat mission over North Korea. 1951

During the Korean War, the 43d sent aircrews to the Far East to refuel fighter aircraft, at that time an experimental procedure. Deployed 21 Mar-5 Jun 1953 to Lakenheath RAF Station, England. In 1953, the 43d AREFS completed transition to new aircraft, the KC-97, equipped with the recently developed flying boom.

Upon notice of the transition to KC-97s, the 43 transferred fourteen of their assigned 25 KB-29M aircraft. Nine went to the 55th Recon Wing and 90th Bomb Wing at Forbes AFB, Kansas. The remaining five were sent to OCAMA storage. The other eleven were also transferred to Forbes before the end of 1953. In the same months, twenty of the newer KC-97G aircraft were received, the final being set for Jan 1954.

Deployed 18 Sep-9 Dec 1954 to Fairford RAF Station, England.

The 43 Air Refueling Squadron was assigned to the 4170th on 15 November 1960 and changed its suffix from "Medium" to "Heavy" in preparation for transition to the KC-135A. The 43 AREFS flew its last KC-97 mission in October 1960. The first crews of the 43 arrived on 19 March 1961 from Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, and the first of the KC-135's arrived on 24 March 1961. With this new aircraft, 43d aircrews over the next few years refueled aircraft virtually everywhere in the world. Aircraft and crews deployed temporarily to Guam, Alaska, Greenland, Spain, England, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. In Aug 1964, 43 aircrews deployed to Clark AB, Philippines, to begin supporting combat in Southeast Asia. Before terminating this refueling support in December 1975, the 43 AREFS dedicated substantial resources to the Vietnam War.

On 2 Apr 1966, the 43d moved from Larson to Fairchild AFB, Wash. In May-June 1980, the eruption of Mt. Saint Helens forced the suspension of operations from Fairchild for a month, but the 43d operated four tankers each from Beale AFB and Travis AFB, Calif. Once again, from 7 May

to 8 Aug 1983, the squadron left Fairchild, deploying to Grant County Airport (formerly Larson AFB), Wash, while the Fairchild runway was repaired.

Worldwide air refueling until 1995, including supporting combat operations in Southeast Asia, 1967-1975 and in Southwest Asia, Jan-Feb 1991.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency, U.S. Air Force, Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Unit yearbook. *Larson AFB, WA, 462nd Strategic Aerospace Wing. @1964.*